

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJ: PSOE LEADER INTERVIEWED

REF: LISBON 0560 (DTG 270924Z JAN 76)

SUMMARY: IN INTERVIEW WITH EDITOR BALSEMAO PUBLISHED IN JAN 24 EDITION OF LEADING WEEKLY "ESPRESSO", SPANISH SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (PSOE) LEADER FELIPE GONZALEZ CALLED ATTENTION TO THE NEED TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON SPANISH GOVERNMENT WHILE RECOGNIZING THE LIMITS OF SUCH PRESSURE. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF UPCOMING TESTS IN THE UNIONS AND THE MUNICIPALITIES. THE PSOE WOULD ACCEPT LEGAL STATUS IF GRANTED -- EVEN IF COMMUNISTS

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WERE NOT LEGALIZED. GONZALEZ SAID THE PSOE CONTINUED TO WORK

TOWARD AGREEMENT AMONG MAJOR POLITICAL CURRENTS --
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, COMMUNISTS, AND SOCIALISTS -- BUT
REJECTED ALLIANCE WITH THE JUNTA DEMOCRATICA. RECAP OF
GONZALEZ COMMENTS FOLLOWS. REFTEL REPORTED "EXPRESSO" SIMILAR
INTERVIEW WITH PCP LEADER CARLOS SANTA MARIA.
END SUMMARY.

1. RIGHTIST DIVISIONISM: MANY OF THE EMERGING
POLITICAL GROUPS ARE NOTHING MORE THAN COLLECTIONS
OF FRIENDS FORMED TO NEGOTIATE AT THE SUMMIT WITH THE
SOCIALIST PARTY OR THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (PSOE).
EXAMPLES OF SUCH GROUPS INCLUDE: THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE OF
CASTELA, THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF ARAGAO, AND THE SOCIALIST
ALLIANCE OF BALEARES. SUCH "DIVISIONISM" IS PROMOTED BY THE
RIGHT THROUGH CONTROL OF THE MEDIA. A MINI-GROUP OF 20
PERSONS GETS THE SAME COVERAGE AS A MAJOR POLITICAL PARTY.

2. LEFTIST DIVISIONISM: LEFTISTS ALSO PROMOTE DIVISIONS
AMONG THE SOCIALISTS. FOR EXAMPLE, A "DIVISIONIST OPERATION"
CLEARLY EXISTS WITHIN THE JUNTA DEMOCRATICA. THE COMMUNISTS
KNOW THIS BETTER THAN ANYONE. THERE IS ALSO A PROBLEM OF
FACTIONALISM IN CATALONIA, WHICH IS RELATED TO THE "FEDERALISM"
ISSUE. HOWEVER, THE KEY ELEMENT IN BUILDING SOCIALISM IN
SPAIN REMAINS THE PSOE.

3. PSOE VS. PSP: PSOE WILL NOT ENGAGE IN A STERILE DEBATE
OVER CLAIMS OF NUMERICAL SUPPORT WITH THE POPULAR SOCIALIST
PARTY (PSP). IF THE PSP WANTS UNITY, LET IT FIRST SUBMIT
ITSELF TO JUDGEMENT BY THE PARTY BASES RATHER THAN ATTEMPT-
ING TO IMPOSE UNITY FROM ABOVE. IF THERE ARE TO BE POLITICAL
UNDERSTANDINGS, THE PSOE MUST FIRST KNOW WHAT THE GROUPS
PROPOSING SUCH UNDERSTANDINGS REALLY STAND FOR. IT IS STILL
UNCLEAR WHO STANDS BEHIND THE JUNTA DEMOCRATICA. IN SPAIN
THERE ARE CLEARLY DEFINED POLITICAL CURRENTS -- THE CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS, THE COMMUNISTS AND THE SOCIALISTS. THE PSOE HAS
BEEN WORKING TOWARD AGREEMENT AMONG THESE CURRENTS; THIS IS
WHY THE PSOE HAS REJECTED THE JUNTA DEMOCRATICA.

4. HELSINGOR MEETING: AS POINTED OUT AT HELSINGOR, THERE IS
A DIFFERENCE IN THE SITUATIONS IN NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN
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EUROPE. IN THE SOUTH, THE HEAVY INFLUENCE OF THE CATHOLIC
CHURCH HAS BEEN A MAJOR FACTOR. ONE RESULT HAS BEEN THE
GREATER TENDENCY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT TO ACCEPT THE MORE
RIGID, DOGMATIC, AND HIERARCHICAL SCHEMES OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTIES. THIS HAS STRENGTHENED COMMUNIST PARTIES
IN SOUTHERN EUROPE. IT HAS OBLIGED THE SOCIALISTS TO ACCEPT
CERTAIN ALLIANCES AND COMPROMISES WITH THE COMMUNISTS DESPITE
THE PROFOUND DIFFERENCES WHICH EXIST BETWEEN SOCIALIST AND

COMMUNIST PARTIES. GIVEN SPANISH HISTORY, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT, IN THE NEAR TERM, THE COUNTRY COULD BE GOVERNED BY A "POPULIST FRONT" WITH A BARE 52 PERCENT MARGIN. THE COUNTRY, HOWEVER, COULD BE GOVERNED BY A "BROAD COALITION OF PROGRESSIVE PARTIES" IF THE MEMBERS OBTAINED 60 PERCENT OF THE VOTES. SUCH A COALITION COULD INCLUDE THE COMMUNISTS AND SECTORS WITHIN "CHRISTIANISM," WHICH ARE INCLINED TO THE CENTER-LEFT.

5. UNITY WITHIN PSOE: THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY REPRESENTS AN ESSENTIAL "LEAP OF GENERATIONS." DURING THE PERIOD FROM 1940 TO 1955 THERE WAS ALMOST A TOTAL ABSENCE OF COLLECTIVE OPPOSITION TO THE REGIME. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY HAD TO BE TRANSFERRED TO A NEW GENERATION OPERATING PRIMARILY INSIDE THE COUNTRY. THE ADJUSTMENT HAS BEEN MADE, AND 95 PERCENT OF THE PARTY MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP.

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6. THE FUTURE: THERE HAS BEEN A "POPULAR EXPLOSION" OF LIBERTY FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF FRANCO. BUT THE POLITICAL PROJECT OF FRAGA IRIBARNE IS ENDANGERING POSSIBILITIES FOR GRADUAL LIBERALIZATION OF THE REGIME. THE THREAT FROM THE ULTRA-RIGHT IS BEING USED AS AN EXCUSE FOR SLOWING THE PACE TOWARD DEMOCRACY. BUT THE ULTRA-RIGHT HAS NO POPULAR BASE; THE RIGHT WILL ULTIMATELY HAVE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE LEFT. IF THE LEFT HAD SUFFICIENT VISION, IT WOULD CONCLUDE: (A) THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO CONTINUE TO PRESS, BUT IT IS EQUALY ESSENTIAL TO KNOW WHERE THE PRESSURE IS LEADING AND WHAT ITS LIMITS ARE; (B) THAT THE TWO BATTLES OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE DURING THE COMING YEAR WILL BE FOUGHT IN THE UNIONS AND THE MUNICIPALITIES. THESE TESTS WILL REVEAL THE TRUE SITUATION

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IN THE COUNTRY.

7. LEGALIZATION OF PARTIES: THE PSOE WILL ACCEPT NO COMPROMISE WHICH INVOLVES THE EXCLUSION OF ANY POLITICAL FORCE WHICH FIGHTS FOR DEMOCRACY. IF THE GOVERNMENT LEGALIZES THE PSOE, IT WOULD USE ITS LEGAL STATUS -- EVEN IF ALL GROUPS WERE NOT LEGALIZED -- BECAUSE IT WOULD PLACE THE PSOE IN A BETTER POSITION TO PRESS FOR THE LIBERTY OF ALL.

8. CHURCH AND ARMED FORCES: THE CHURCH IS ATTEMPTING TO GET CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE. IN LARGE MEASURE IT IS JUST FOLLOWING THE POLICY OF THE VATICAN, BUT IT IS ATTEMPTING TO ADAPT THAT POLICY TO NEW SITUATIONS. THE ARMED FORCES IS LARGEY CONSERVATIVE, WITH AN ULTRA-RIGHT FACTION SIMILAR TO THAT IN THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. BUT THERE ARE INCIPIENT DEMOCRATIC ELEMENTS, WITH EXPANDING POWER WITHIN THE ARMY. IT IS STILL IMPOSSIBLE TO THINK OF CHANGE IF THE ARMY DOES NOT PERMIT IT.

9. ROLE OF THE MONARCHY: IF THE PEOPLE SHOULD ELECT A CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY, THE PSOE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE A REPUBLICAN PARTY. BUT THE PSOE WOULD ACCEPT THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE IF IT WERE FREELY MADE.

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